



MEDIA RELEASE

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ABC arts cuts disrespectful to arts workers and audiences

The axing of the ABC's dedicated arts reporting team is a serious blow to informed coverage of Australia's cultural sector, says the union for arts and entertainment workers.

The Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance says the decision to abolish a standalone arts unit will inevitably lead to a downgrading of coverage of the arts and sends a poor signal about where the arts stand in the ABC's priorities.

MEAA Chief Executive Erin Madeley said the decision by the ABC flew in the face of the *Revive* National Cultural Policy which seeks to restore the importance of the arts in Australia's society and economy.

"Arts coverage has been a fundamental role of the ABC from its earliest days so we struggle to see how this decision fulfils its charter obligations to 'encourage and promote the musical, dramatic and other performing arts in Australia'," Ms Madeley said.

"Arts coverage by all media in Australia has been on the decline for the past decade and this decision by ABC management is a body blow to our cultural sector and to arts audiences.

"For people living in remote and regional Australia who rarely have physical access to arts and rely on the national broadcaster to provide them with their cultural 'fix', this risks leaving them with even fewer opportunities to participate in our artistic and cultural life.

"And it will make it more difficult for artists, particularly those at the beginning of their careers, to get the exposure on which they can build a lasting body of work."

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